



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

713 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

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January 18, 2008

To: Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich
From: 
William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer

STATUS REPORT - BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING (BCP)

On March 4, 2003, your Board directed the development of a Countywide Business Continuity Planning (BCP) program. There has been continuous work to complete BCP plans across all County departments and the number of plans continues to grow in the system.

Strohl Consulting Services Assessment

In June 2006, Strohl Consulting Services (Strohl) conducted an assessment of the County's utilization of their Living Disaster Recovery Planning System (LDRPS) software to provide the County with a roadmap toward its future enhanced usage of LDRPS. Strohl made numerous recommendations regarding the best practices, training, and redundant information. Specific recommendations included:

- Re-train plan writers on critical data field entries.
- Implement naming convention practices.
- Revise plan writer security profiles.
- Remove redundant and unnecessary data and plans from system.
- Create "best practices" document and revise plan assistants.

In addition to the recommendations made by Strohl, County coordinators recommended increasing the number of concurrent licenses available to plan writers and providing accelerated training to key personnel. In October 2006, your Board approved Amendment No. 1 to the Strohl contract which increased the total number of licenses,

added three years to the licensing term, and provided pool dollars for consulting services and products as needed.

Office of Emergency Management Survey

Beginning in February 2007, the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) conducted a survey of 121 BCP plans to determine what obstacles, in addition to those identified by Strohl, prevented County plan writers from completing acceptable plans. The OEM Survey had the following objectives and methods:

1. Review plans to determine quality and consistency of completed plans.

Plans were measured against "Test Questions" (attached) found in the BCP Department Handbook. The review evaluated whether all planning requirements were attempted and/or completed. Comments gathered for each reviewed plan were recorded, shared, and used as discussion points in meetings with department plan writers.

2. Identify areas where the goal or purpose of the plan was misunderstood and prevented plan completion.

Input was gathered mainly from users in meetings and training sessions. Concurrent with efforts on the OEM Survey, a new approach to training and new series of training meetings were developed for plan writers and coordinators. Training targeted observed weaknesses in existing plans and the specific goals of continuity planning in the County. Because of the high turnover in department plan writers, training sessions also included information useful to newly assigned staff. Working with the Chief Information Office (CIO) staff, OEM modified existing training materials for "mini" training sessions held between February and November 2007.

3. Identify areas where inexperience and technical difficulties with the software prevented plan completion.

Input was gathered from users in meetings or when they contacted OEM for technical assistance. This review found consistent problems in printing, "lost" documents, restrictive security profiles, inconsistent naming conventions, and misidentified processes/functions. When feasible, OEM provided technical and programmatic assistance to resolve these problems. In some cases, Strohl's Help Desk was effective in resolving the problem.

4. Identify overriding issues that require direct assistance from Strohl.

A series of status reports, between February and November 2007, identified issues that could not be resolved without extended assistance from Strohl. Collectively, these reports form the basis of the County's request for assistance from Strohl discussed in the next section.

Implementation Strategy

In November 2007, OEM and CIO staff met with Strohl to discuss which recommendations from the 2006 Assessment and the 2007 OEM Survey should be implemented and how those recommendations are affected by the new version of the LDRPS software. In 2007, Strohl launched a significant upgrade to the LDRPS software which fundamentally changes the way data is organized and functions.

In December 2007 Strohl, OEM, and the CIO agreed to a statement of work that includes the following:

- Review BCP Program Management Structure.
- Develop minimum plan requirements including plan contents, output, reporting, and metrics.
- Plan model/template requirements and content.
- Develop a high-level specification document for LDRPS Plan Structure to map the County's recovery organizational structures.
- Review BCP plan requirements (i.e. base plan templates, discussions, and industry recommended practices) to determine data capture and maintenance requirements.
- Develop a specification document for LDRPS data dictionaries and assign dictionary screen formats, field sizes, field attributes, and help text to enable effective capture, management, and enterprise reporting of plan data.
- Develop a security specification document for LDRPS security (system, database, and application).
- Develop a specification for system of record to LDRPS imports.
- Review and prepare LDRPS 9.1 data for migration to LDRPS 10.

The services listed above are estimated at \$35,200 - \$50,560 and will be completed within 90 days of the start of the project. The funds identified to support this project were approved by your Board in October 2006, in Amendment No. 1, to the Strohl contract (\$175,000 allocated for consulting services).

We anticipate the above statement of work will be the first of a multiple-stage project that will result in the following improvements to the County's Continuity Planning efforts:

- A more robust continuity planning software tool.
- Updated training and guidance for plan writers.
- More flexible reporting capabilities.
- Improved data integrity.

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Please direct questions regarding this report to Ms. Jeanne O'Donnell, OEM, at (323) 980-2227 or Mr. Sir Clark, CIO, at (213) 974-1739. An updated progress report will be provided by June 30, 2008.

WTF:SRH:RDC
MJB:JOD:KH:lbm

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
 County Counsel
 Chief Information Officer

Attachment

BCP Status Report

Test Questions

- 1) *Was there a Plan Overview. Did overview include any exceptions, restrictions, or dependencies to the implementation of the BCP?*
- 2) *On BCP Scope page, did Plan provide a detailed overview of the department and unit's scope of operation or did it include Work Around or Ad Hoc?*
- 3) *Did Plan document the executive chain of succession for department managers and for county government? Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 4) *Did Plan establish service priorities for programs (processes) with recovery timelines and lists of essential resources to continue critical, department operations? Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 5) *Did Plan identify critical business functions and the dependent resources that will support those functions? Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 6) *Did Plan address essential backup equipment and supplies, essential communications, essential staff, and other dependencies? Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 7) *Did Plan include Call Trees to ensure staff can be located in the event of an emergency? Do these Call Trees include both home and work/cell telephone numbers? Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 8) *Did Plan include Teams and Team Tasks identifying critical managers and staff to continue essential business functions? Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 9) *Did Plan document plans for an alternate Emergency Operations Center, including physical addresses, in the event the Department Operations Center is inoperable. Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 10) *Did the Plan document which vendor would be called to provide critical support for essential services in case of an emergency? Did the plan also document any restrictions to service requirements from vendors such as the contract restrictions that were agreed upon when contract was initiated? Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 11) *Did Plan reflect real recovery solutions using current available technology? Were technology gaps identified when there is a computer or communications backbone system, but no currently viable recovery plan? Were these technology gaps entered into the plan page called "LAC Recovery Strategies?" Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*
- 12) *Did Plan provide a test, training, and exercise program as future recovery strategy? Did the plan include a schedule and number per event? Yes or No and Work Around or Ad Hoc*